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ABSTRACT

This book is based on a study of a 4-year reform effort in the Newark (New Jersey) public schools. The discussion focuses on an elementary school as it attempted reform in an effort that was ultimately unsuccessful. Part I opens the discussion of the effects of social class and race on educational reform. To see why inner city schools have not improved, it is not enough to examine reform or educational practice. It is first necessary to see why the schools have come to be what they are, and how the interaction of social class and race have contributed to the poor state of inner city schools. Part II ties the account of the educational reform effort in Newark to past economic and political trends. Newark serves as a historical case study of the ways in which economic and political decisions have shaped America's cities and her schools. It is demonstrated that, contrary to common belief, public education in Newark was of poor quality long before African Americans took over the reins of city government. Part III develops a new vision of reform that urges that some of America's vast resources be directed to the reconstruction of the central city government. The analysis of conditions of the Newark schools shows that educational reform efforts must also include efforts to restore economic and political opportunities to inner city residents. The following chapters are included: (1) "Cities, Urban Schools, and Current Visions of Educational Reform"; (2) "Social Class, Race and Educational Reform at Marcy School"; (3) "Industrial Strength, Educational Reform, and the Immigrant Poor: 1860-1929"; (4) "Beginning of the Decline: The 1930s"; (5) "Pauperization of the City and Its Schools: 1945-1960"; (6) "Organized Crime and Municipal and Educational Chaos: The 1960s"; and (7) "Class, Race, Taxes, and State Educational Reform: 1970-1997." (Contains 350 references.) (SLD)

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